

These questions/concerns about priority project:

- Preservation of overall tree canopy, saving healthy stands rather than focusing on individual trees, is a huge priority. The ball courts could be moved to the east to possibly better accomplish that goal. Protection of trees, wetlands and wildlife are very important, not only to me personally, but in our General Plan and Zoning Code. SFW can't have boat docks or grottos in wetlands, and rightly so. The owners of the lake on our side are not allowed to use it in any manner. How is it appropriate for you to have them, even if Corps approval is given? The grotto could easily be moved, and the dock removed.
- A lot of us are concerned with the two current proposals for tax-exempt religious non-profit facilities in town. Projects that will not bring in sales or property tax revenue can fairly be seen as burdens to our community. What will Loomis gain from your project? If you're cloistered, will you be eating at our restaurants, shopping at the drugstore, and buying groceries at Raley's? How will you be a contributing part of our community? Will you do any charitable work in town?
- Loomis has expressed a preference for Craftsman architecture in new projects. Your plans are for a Spanish mission-style building. It's a very large building that could blend in more with Loomis. Non-Spanish roof tiles, perhaps? Different accent stone?
- Are you aware of recent state laws – WELO (Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance), and the brand new green building codes? Both mandate big changes from the way things used to be done.
- Will you consider retaining the strawberry field? Loomis places high value on small agricultural activity. Lots of people would hate to see the strawberry field go. It would be great to encourage the renters to start growing biodynamically instead of using so many pesticides and herbicides. Better for everyone's health, including yours, and would be a draw for those of us who will always pay more for organic and sustainable. Such strawberries are very hard to find locally.
- The bell tower...why so high? Will there be bells that actually ring, or is it for show? SFW is a very quiet neighborhood, and I imagine I'm not the only one who doesn't want to hear bells. Okay, I could live with twice a year on Christmas and Easter mornings. :)

- Traffic...I cringe at the thought of 150 more people trying to head west on Rocklin Road during commute hours. Even in vans, you'd be adding a lot of vehicles to what can be a very long line. Especially during the first few weeks of Sierra College semesters. Rocklin has, for some unknown reason, placed a long bulb-out in the middle of the road, and not included a right turn lane. Anyone trying to turn left or right onto Sierra College Blvd. has to wait in line with everyone trying to go straight. As Poppy Ridge, Monte Claire, and Montserrat build out, this will only get worse. Please make sure the traffic study addresses your contribution to this problem. Maybe you could work with Rocklin to change the bottleneck as part of your mitigation. Removing part of the bulb-out and adding a right turn pocket may be workable and fairly inexpensive.
- We already have two church facilities within a stone's throw of your site. This is a residential area. People are concerned that a third, and a very large one, is too many.
- If your site were to be built out as 9 residential 4.6+ ac lots, as called for in the General Plan, we would be gradually adding maybe 50 new residents. 150 is a very high amount for our little town to be absorb in one whack. We've added only 600 people in 25 years! This is a huge concern.

Thanks for the opportunity to give input.



DOMINICAN SISTERS OF MARY, MOTHER OF THE EUCHARIST

RECEIVED

February 25, 2011

FEB 25 2011

TOWN OF LOOMIS

Via Hand Delivery

Janet Thew, Chairperson
Town of Loomis Planning Commission
3665 Taylor Road
Loomis, CA 95650

Re: Project #10-11, Regina Caeli Priory

Dear Ms. Thew:

Thank you so much for meeting with me, John Griffin, and Kathy Kerdus on Thursday, February 10, and thank you especially for providing us with a summary of your concerns based on your preliminary review of our proposal. On behalf of all the Sisters, I appreciate the amount of interest your suggestions and requests for additional information represent. Since meeting with you I have discussed the comments contained in your letter with Mr. Griffin, Mrs. Barnes, and many of our consultants. I don't have answers for you on all the points in your letter, but my responses are intended to answer as many of your questions immediately as is possible, and open the door for possible further discussions.

Regarding your suggestion for a site visit, the Sisters and I have also gone over our weekend schedules with Ms. Kerdus, and originally proposed Saturday March 19. I understand that because several members of the Council and planning Commission will be at a conference that day won't work, so we have tentatively scheduled the site visit for Saturday, March 26 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. As discussed, we will informally stake the corners of the Priory building and place balloons to identify the height of the bell tower. With respect to some of your more specific comments:

1. Preservation of the Tree Canopy

As noted in our meeting, our current plans require the removal of approximately 220 trees of the approximately 700 trees existing on the site. Therefore, we are saving approximately 60% of the existing trees, which is far more than would be saved if the property were developed in the alternative use of 8-9 estates on 5-acre lots. It is our intention to mitigate the loss of the trees as required by Town Code. We will continue to work with the Town as it updates its current mitigation program to manage the tree canopy in the best ways possible, and are willing to consider revisions to the landscape plan as the environmental review moves forward.

MISSION ADVANCEMENT OFFICE
CALIFORNIA
5820 ROCKLIN ROAD
LOOMIS, CA 95650
PH. (916) 652-5001

MISSION ADVANCEMENT OFFICE
NATIONAL
24 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT DRIVE
P.O. BOX 365
ANN ARBOR, MI 48106
PH. (734) 930-4222
FX. (734) 930-4230
www.sistersofmary.org

MISSION ADVANCEMENT OFFICE
TEXAS
14741 OLIVE HILL DRIVE
AUSTIN, TX 78717
PH. (512) 949-2436

Janet Thew, Chairperson
Town of Loomis Planning Commission
February 25, 2011
Page 2

2. Preservation of Wetlands and Wildlife Corridors

As discussed in our meeting, every effort has been made to completely avoid adverse effects in the wetlands. Based on the delineation we have submitted with our application, the only place where proposed improvements touch a delineated wetland is one narrow piece of walkway leading to the grotto, not the grotto itself [see attached landscape plan]. However, based on your comment, we have consulted again with Tom Skordal and GSM, and will modify the landscape plan to bridge the wetland where the walkway to the grotto was shown, instead of placement of pervious cover, so that no impacts will occur anywhere on the project. Your memo also mentions the pier shown on the landscape design. We will make any and all changes required to our landscape/hardscape plans so as not to violate any wetland restrictions noted by the Army Corps of Engineers and the State of California.

3. Religious Uses in the Town of Loomis and Their Effect on the Tax Base

Your question raises interesting points as to what benefits can religiously-based organizations bring to the Town. Regarding the status of property taxes, we have already obtained a tax exemption issued by the Board of Equalization and approved by Placer County in 2010.

The Dominican Sisters of Mary is a religious order, who lives on the charity of others. As you are aware from our meeting, our community has experienced extraordinary growth since its foundation in 1997. Our only house of formation, located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, can no longer accommodate all of the Sisters in our community. Therefore, we need another house of formation because of our growth. Thanks to the generosity of a local benefactor, we have been given the property in Loomis for the purpose of providing our community with enough room to house all of our members and those who are waiting to join us. The site was purchased by the Cordova family for its rural setting, which is ideal for the contemplation necessary to the spiritual life of all the Sisters.

The Priory will serve as a house of prayer and formation for young women becoming religious Sisters. The Dominican apostolate is teaching, and as Dominicans we are part of an 800-year history of providing Catholic education. As is well known, Catholic schools provide a high quality education at a fraction of the cost of their public school counterparts. As the history of Catholic education in this country testifies, this has been possible in large measure due to the sacrificial life of religious Sisters who teach in Catholic schools. We hope to serve the local community by supplying teaching Sisters to the many local Catholic schools which have requested our presence. Thus, by providing teachers to these local schools, we directly assist with the education of young people who in turn will contribute to the community.

Janet Thew, Chairperson
Town of Loomis Planning Commission
February 25, 2011
Page 3

We will serve the Loomis community in a more direct manner in less formal settings, by assisting in local parish programs for youth, whether through catechetical work, sacramental preparation, or vocational discernment. At this point in time, families residing in Loomis interested in providing any form of Catholic education for their children must go outside of the Loomis area to do so. With our community volunteering our educational skills, local parents will have choices they have not previously enjoyed.

Additionally, the Sisters want to be a part of the Loomis community, and presently shop locally for groceries, primarily at Raley's and some organic produce at the Blue Goose. When the Priory is built, we intend to continue to patronize Loomis merchants. And on those occasions when family members of the Sisters visit, they will likely patronize the local hotels and restaurants.

4. Architectural Design Issues

The Priory design chosen was mission style, which is consistent with the historic style for convents and monasteries unique to California. We noted that the closest convent, for the Sisters of Mercy in Auburn, was also built in mission style. We have tried very hard to situate the Priory in such a way that once construction is complete, very little of the building, roof, or tower will be seen from any of the surrounding angles. Nevertheless, I have asked PK Architects to look at your suggestion for color changes to the roof tiles, and stone, and am waiting for their response, and will get back to you on this question as soon as I can. We believe the Priory will be aesthetically pleasing, as is evident in the renderings presented for your review.

5. WELO Calculations

GSM will certainly be providing these calculations as required by state law. We have asked them to hold this analysis until we get initial feedback from the Town on the proposed landscape plan.

6. The Strawberry Field

The tenant who has been growing strawberries on the corner of the property has never had anything more than an informal agreement. We met recently with Mr. Saelee and agreed to a more formal annual agreement, subject to minor boundary revisions for our driveway, and corrective fencing. We definitely plan to maintain agriculture on the corner, and the landscape plans show an expansion because the Sisters will want to also grow vegetables and raise fruit. Depending on mutual agreement of the parties, it may be possible to leave the strawberry patch in place and allow Mr. Saelee to help us with our own farming, but it is too early to make any

Janet Thew, Chairperson
Town of Loomis Planning Commission
February 25, 2011
Page 4

plans until we know that the Town is comfortable with our overall landscaping plan and site plan for the Priory.

7. The Bell Tower

The bell tower was situated to respond to the roof line of the main part of the Priory. As shown on the simulations, very little of the bell tower will be seen above the tree canopies after construction. Our plans to ring the bells will be in compliance with local noise ordinances for residential properties. We had already planned an acoustic study to be prepared by Paul Bollard Acoustics of Newcastle.

8. Traffic

I think that there may be a misunderstanding regarding the total amount of traffic to be generated by the Priory. I don't know if you have had an opportunity to review our traffic study yet, but we authorized Ken Anderson to retain a traffic consultant in Ann Arbor who performed an actual car count in August 2010. August is probably the busiest month because we have postulants entering and festivities to celebrate profession of vows. Even though our Motherhouse was bursting, we only showed 70 trips daily, 35 trips each in and out [KDA Study, Nov. 12, 2010, pg. 12]. This is because the postulants and novices do not leave the Priory except occasionally; for example, for doctor and dentist appointments. The only Sisters that leave regularly are the teachers in the local schools, and the number of vehicles is limited to the number of schools being served. So, if our Sisters are teaching in three schools, we would have three vehicles leaving once a day and returning once a day.

Our prayer life requires that all Sisters be present at designated hours of community prayer. Therefore, the maximum travel time to any school would have to be less than 30 minutes. If we accept an invitation to teach at a location further away, a convent would have to be made available for the Sisters teaching there. This is precisely the case with our Sisters who teach at Presentation School in Sacramento. They live in a convent on campus provided by Presentation Parish. For these reasons, Ken Anderson has estimated a maximum of 25 trips a day during the week and far less on the weekends. He believes this amount of traffic is negligible, even with the eventual build-out of the residential developments you mention.

9. Additional Church Facilities

The Priory will contain a chapel for the Sisters' use only. Although it is customary for Catholics to attend local Catholic parishes for their worship needs, our chapel will not be available to the public for Sunday or daily Mass attendance. According to PK Architects, the chapel represents

Janet Thew, Chairperson
Town of Loomis Planning Commission
February 25, 2011
Page 5

14% of the total size of the Priory, by far the most of which is devoted to a residential facility for the Sisters.

10. Comparison of Priory to Alternative Use of a Single-Family Subdivision

As you are aware, the application for the Priory was “deemed complete” January 19, 2011, and therefore the Town should promptly process the application. The first step is to award the contract for environmental work so that a detailed analysis of our project can be prepared, which will explore and hopefully answer many of the questions in your letter. In anticipation of the concerns you have raised, Mrs. Barnes has requested that the bid from all environmental consultants contain an alternatives analysis, which will contrast 9 large single-family homes, their driveways, fencing, etc. with the impacts anticipated from the Priory. Based on preliminary evaluations, and even assuming that the Town only approved an alternative clustered development (unlike St. Francis Woods and more recent approvals for Poppy Ridge and Montserrat), I am informed that the number of trees required to be removed, the traffic generated, and impacts regarding vehicle miles traveled will be much higher with any type of subdivision, rather than our Priory.

Your letter makes reference to 150 people; however, our application indicates the number of monastic cells to be constructed is fixed at 115. In accord with the formation structure of our community, only about 75 Sisters would be in occupancy at the Priory on a full time basis. Full occupancy of 100 Sisters is only anticipated during Christmas and the month of August. The additional 15 cells are set aside for occasional female visitors interested in learning more about our community life. I hope this explanation makes clear our intended use of the Priory.

Admittedly, our way of life is unique, and we understand that most people are unfamiliar with what is, to us, not at all unusual. So please do not hesitate to ask for further explanations regarding our way of life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sister Mary Samuel Handwerker" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sister Mary Samuel Handwerker
Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist

Attachment: *Landscape Plan*

cc: Kathy Kerdus, Planning Director



PK ARCHITECTS, PC
1333 WEST BROADWAY ROAD, #101
TEMPE, ARIZONA 85282
PHONE: (602) 283-1620
FAX: (602) 283-1621
www.pkarchitects.net



**DOMINICAN SISTERS
OF MARY, MOTHER
OF THE EUCHARIST**

BE KNOWN THAT THIS SET OF PLANS HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR BUILDING PLAN REVIEW PURPOSES ONLY. AT THIS TIME, THIS SET OF PLANS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED PRELIMINARY IN NATURE AND NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION. THIS SET OF PLANS SHALL NOT BE DEEMED FINAL UNTIL ALL APPROVALS HAVE BEEN OBTAINED FROM ALL AFFECTED AGENCIES. APPROVED FOR THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM BY THE CITY ENGINEER, PLANS DIVISION, 1000 17TH AVENUE, BIRMINGHAM, AL 35203.

PROJECT NO:	1014
PRINT DATE:	11/15/10
PROJECT MGR:	MER
CHECKED BY:	GSM




CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

L1.0

PLANT PALETTE

[illegible][illegible]

SOD AND HYDROSEED LEGEND

	Turf
	Native Grass Hydroseed
	Native Mow Free Sod

PRELIMINARY PARKING LOT SHADE CALCULATIONS

[illegible]

NOTES:

1. Shade is calculated according to the percentage of shade covering (sf) of the tree canopy, determined by the location of the tree within the parking lot. Refer to the Conceptual Landscape Plan.
2. The shade percentage figures are based on the canopy spread of the tree 15 years from time of planting. The tree is assumed to be planted from a 1.5 gallon container.
3. sf = square feet



PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

